St Albert’s Catholic School

Fee Policy

Rationale

In order to meet its requirements, the school charges fees and the following policy provides the guidelines for the setting, collection and remission of these fees.

As with all Catholic Schools, St. Albert’s receives some Government funding. However, the school is dependent upon income from school fees, fundraising and parish contributions for the provision of educational facilities and resources, payment of day-to-day operational works and capital works, in order to provide a contemporary education for our students.

Aim

St. Albert’s will set fees at a level to maintain quality education for the students whilst having consideration for the financial capacity of the community we serve. The School Board will ensure that the financial responsibilities of all families are met as to their agreed obligations by having a systematic and identifiable procedure for the imposition and collection of fees thus ensuring the financial well being of the school.

It is the responsibility of the School Board to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to enable the collection of school fees. Parents/Caregivers make a commitment to pay school fees by entering into a Contract when they sign the Enrolment form, prior to their child/ren commencing at St. Albert’s.

The Finance Sub Committee of the School Board oversees the collection of fees and will review outstanding fees on a regular ongoing basis. This committee reports to the Board the status of fee collection. All family details remain confidential to the Finance Committee at all times.

Preamble

St. Albert’s operates within the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) guidelines for the maintenance of private income.

It is the policy of the SACCS that no child be denied a Catholic Education because of a parent’s demonstrated ability to pay fees subject to the school’s enrolment policy and that of SACCS.

Nevertheless those who are able to pay should be required to do so.

Families who qualify for support under the SA Government School Card Scheme may apply for financial assistance through hardship.

School fees and charges are set in light of the School’s Five Year Plan, which has been prepared in consultation with the Finance Team of the Catholic Education Office. The level of the School’s Ross Farish Index (a socio-economic indicator) and the Annual Guidelines set by the CEO, guide decisions about fees and charges.
Fee structure

St. Albert’s will set an annual fee each year comprising:

1. Tuition Fee
2. Resource Fee
3. Building Levy
4. Diocesan Levy
5. Excursion Levy (Years R-6) – Enrichment Week Camp/Activity
6. Stationery Fee
7. Swimming Levy – will be charged to accounts separately.

* An account for the year is issued for each child within the first two weeks of Term 1 and is posted to families.

Tuition Fee:
Tuition fees are payable to support the operational costs of the school not met by Government funding received by the school.
There is no charge for the fourth child when four or more children of the one and same immediate family are enrolled and are attending St Albert’s Catholic School Loxton during full or part of the same year, i.e. January to December of the year.

Resource Fee
This fee is used to fund all classroom and curriculum support materials required by the teaching staff and students. The resource fee is issued for each child.

Building Levy:
This levy is used to assist pay for the school’s capital development and upgrade. Building Levy is compulsory to families and cannot be claimed as a tax deduction. A Building Levy account is issued for each family.

Diocese of Port Pirie Diocesan Schools Pastoral Fund Levy
This levy is charged to schools within the Diocese of Port Pirie. This levy is issued to each child and forwarded directly to Catholic Education Port Pirie Diocese. Families who qualify for school card will be exempt from this levy.

Excursion Levy:
This levy covers the cost of the annual Enrichment Week camp and associated activities and most other curriculum based excursions during the year. An Excursion Levy account is issued for each child. Year 7 students who attend Canberra trip will be invoiced for the cost of the Canberra trip early term 4 when final cost is known.

Swimming Levy:
This levy covers the cost of one week’s swimming lessons. The Swimming Levy account is issued to each child participating in the swimming lessons program.
Schedule of fees

The Finance Committee will oversee all matters relating to the setting of fees, remissions and collections. The Finance Committee will consist of the Principal, the Bursars and/or Finance officers and a representative of the School Board.

Once the Finance Committee sets the school fees they will be approved by the School Board and notification will be given to parents/caregivers before the end of the school year.

On Application for Enrolment, parents/caregivers will be provided with the ‘Schedule of Fees and Charges’, and the ‘Payment Plan’

Prospective parents/caregivers will also be informed that on enrolment of their child, they accept the responsibility for the payment of tuition fees and other costs associated with the education of their children. Parents/caregivers make a commitment to pay school fees when they sign the Application for Enrolment Form for our school which is to be signed by both parents/all caregivers responsible for payment of fees.

Family Discounts

Tuition fee reduction is available to families with two or more children attending the School on the following basis:

- 2 children – full fees less 5%
- 3 children – full fees less 10%
- 4 child and subsequent children – no charge*

*This applies when four or more children of the one and same immediate family are enrolled and are attending St. Albert’s Catholic School Loxton during full or part of the same year, i.e. January to December.

School Card

Families on low incomes are encouraged to apply for assistance under the School Card Scheme. It is important that parents/caregivers work with the school to complete the necessary documentation, as there are administrative cut-off dates (determined by the Department of Education and Children Services) that apply each term. Forms are to be requested via the Payment Plan.

Financial hardship

Where families are experiencing financial hardship, they are encouraged to apply in writing for assistance for a warranted reduction in tuition fees. Any applications for tuition fee assistance are treated as confidential.

Non-payment of reduced tuition fee is treated as an overdue account.

Any reduction in tuition fees will be considered in terms of the financial needs of the family and of the School Board’s responsibility to families who are making the effort to pay regular fees.

Families are granted a reduction of tuition fees for the current year only, after which time they would need to reapply in future years if their financial circumstances have not improved.

Likewise, it will be seen as the family’s responsibility to make good all or part of any reductions if their financial position improved markedly.
Families are encouraged to:

1. Make an appointment and meet with the Principal if they are experiencing difficulty in paying fees so that the necessary steps for fee reduction and/or adjustment to payment plan application can be discussed.

2. Apply to the School Finance Officer to pay by instalments if this payment is easier. Payment by instalment can include direct debit or Centrelink deductions and payment schedules can be arranged. Forms to organise Centrelink deductions are available from the school office.

**Payment of fees**

St. Albert’s School supports the concept of equitable financial responsibility on all members of its community and payment of fees by the due date or by way of regular payments is part of the process. To achieve this goal, the school encourages regular communication between all parties in relation to the payment of fees.

Accounts can be paid by cash, cheque, direct debit, via EFTPOS during the month of August, or Centrelink deductions. The details for direct debit are noted on the Payment Plan. Direct debit is the preferred payment plan.

**Fee collection timelines**

**Family Accounts**

The annual tax invoice for fees and charges will be forwarded to families during the first two weeks of Term 1 via Australia Post. Monthly statements will be issued via the eldest child.

**Tuition Fees – payment timeline:**

School fees are to be paid as follows -

- one third of the annual amount (the first instalment) is due at the end of term 1;
- two-thirds of the total annual amount (the second instalment) is due at the end of term 2; and
- the full amount of the annual amount billed (the third instalment) is due at the end of term 3.

All instalment amounts are to be paid in full by the end of each term of the current year unless:

a) a regular direct payment plan is in place to clear the account balance owing in full by Week 6 of Term 4 of the current year; or

b) alternative formally approved repayment arrangements have been made with the Finance Committee.

Arrangements for payment of tuition fees by families who leave the school community during the school year must be discussed with the Principal with the understanding that fee reimbursement will be on the basis that:-

- students will be charged for actual weeks attended, if transferring to another Catholic School or to a school out of the Riverland district.
- if a student/s leave/s during a term to transfer to another Loxton school, the family will be charged for the whole term unless the school has been notified during the prior term, in which case the student/s will be charged for actual weeks attended.
**Debt collection agency**

Following a family’s departure from the school, where fees remain outstanding, with no acceptable arrangement for payment in place, and no attempt is being made to reduce the debt, the account may be passed to the School’s debt collection agency, who may, if directed:
- Refer to solicitors
- Take Court action to recover the fees, where deemed appropriate.

**Parents are advised that any costs incurred in the use of the debt collection agency will be billed to their account.**

Once the collection agency has been engaged, parents are required to work through the agency for settlement of their account.

**Supporting documents**

† St Alberts Fees Payment Plan
† St Alberts Schedule of Fees and Charges

Signed ______________________________  Date /   /  
Principal on behalf of School Board  

| Review Date |